Press Release

The FCC's Rejection of Starlink's Bid and its Impact on Connecting Unserved Americans

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The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently reversed its previous decision to award Starlink, SpaceX's low Earth orbit satellite broadband provider, $885 million to provide high-speed internet to nearly 650,000 unserved rural homes and businesses across 35 states. In a new insight, Technology and Innovation Policy Analyst Joshua Levine discusses the key arguments from both sides of the dispute between the FCC and Starlink, as well as the broader issue of a "future-proof" approach versus a "technology-neutral" approach to broadband network deployment.

Key points:

- The FCC's notice of reversal highlights concerns with Starlink's ability to meet established benchmarks for bandwidth and the long-term viability of its network, as well as the service's high price point compared to alternative technologies.
- Notably, FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr disagreed with these concerns, noting that the FCC does not have an alternative provider for these consumers.
- Regardless of the merits of the FCC's Starlink decision, the agency should ensure it prioritizes the RDOF's goal of bringing broadband deployment to unserved Americans and ensuring taxpayer money is spent efficiently to further that goal.

Read the analysis